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Social Science Division

Division Minutes

11-5-2019

Social Science Division meeting minutes 11/05/2019

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Minutes
Social Science Division Meeting
Tues., Nov. 5th, 2019 during Community Hour (11:40 a.m. to 12:40 p.m.)

Present: Joo, Peters, Narvaez, Kildegaard, Devkota, Gilanshah, Panda, Rose, Guyotte, Lindberg, Burks, Whalen, Deane, Ortiz, Beaver, Dean, Meek, Johnson, Finzel, Rothchild, Stewart, Brands, Claire Larson (Psych student rep.)

Chair Kildegaard opened the meeting by discussing for all present (including student representatives), policy documents that implement the award of indefinite tenure for faculty at the University of Minnesota, starting with the General Criteria for awarding tenure & promotion -- i.e. the "7.11 statement" -- from the Regents Policy on Tenure, as well as the Social Science Division Statement of Department Standards for Tenure a.k.a. the "7.12 statement", which implements and is required by the 7.11. He went on to discuss Vice Chancellor Roper's memo from December, 2018, inviting all units to consider whether their existing 7.12s adequately recognize different aspects of public engagement and/or diversity work. Finally he discussed the charge the division's Policy Committee was given in spring 2019 to consider and possibly revise aspects of our 7.12 that unintentionally serve as impediments to diversifying the faculty.

Changes made by the Science and Math as well as the Humanities division were reviewed briefly. The changes proposed by the Social Science Policy Committee were reviewed next. Kildegaard asked the Policy Committee to explain its decision to propose extensive changes, including to the mission statement and other 7.12 elements not obviously related to recruiting and successfully tenuring under-represented faculty.

The Policy Committee (Narvaez, Peters, Joo) presented a powerpoint covering their process and conclusions. They met repeatedly through the spring and fall, undertaking an ambitious review of tenure codes both internal and external to the U of M. All three agreed that they believed the changes needed to be "holistic" rather than marginal or piecemeal (as for example in the Humanities and the Science and Math divisions). Public engagement, in particular, transcends the familiar boundaries of research/teaching/service, and this they believed required the committee to undertake extensive definitions and elaborations.

A robust discussion followed, in which various points of caution were raised. Various opinions were expressed with respect to the process for evaluating products of public engagement and/or publicly engaged scholarship. Various opinions were expressed with regard to changing our current standard of requiring tenure applicants to be "strong" in both teaching and research, while "superior" in one or the other. Peters argued that the ambiguity of our expectations itself constitutes a significant impediment from the point of view of marginalized populations that have experienced ambiguity as working against them. As a way forward, some of the discussion focused on a possible 4th category (public engagement) that faculty could opt into.

The Policy Committee will circulate a feedback form. Division members are invited to fill it out, to comment directly on the proposed revisions document in the shared drive, and also to speak directly with members of the committee and/or the division chair.

Minutes from 8/22/19 *approved* (Dean; Lindberg).

Announcement (Rothchild): it would be worth everyone's while to look at Brian Burnett's recent email regarding significant retirement system changes.

[adjourned]

Minutes submitted by Chair, Arne Kildegaard